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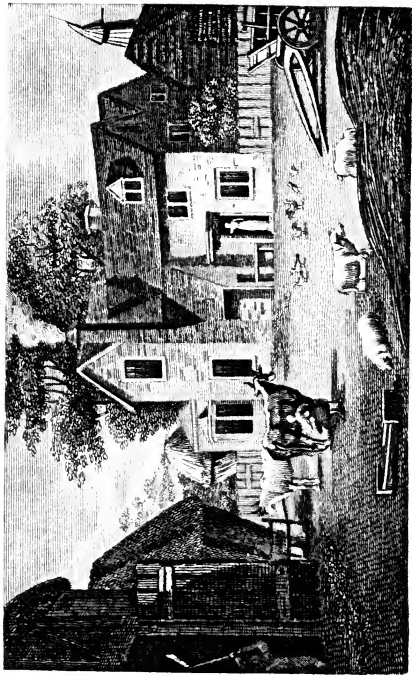
Mrs Brown

1814





Frontpiece.



The Farm Yard.

A
VISIT
TO
A FARM-HOUSE,
OR
AN INTRODUCTION
TO
VARIOUS SUBJECTS,
CONNECTED WITH
RURAL ECONOMY.

EMBELLISHED WITH BEAUTIFUL PLATES.



By S. W.

AUTHOR OF A VISIT TO LONDON, AND A PUZZLE
FOR A CURIOUS GIRL.



FIFTH EDITION.

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P R E F A C E.

THIS little work was undertaken with the design of exciting the attention of those children, who may happen to live in the country to the various objects with which they are surrounded ; and to furnish those, who reside in the metropolis and other large cities, with some information relating to rural economy, which their situation prevents them from acquiring by personal remarks.

The author acknowledges that she is totally incompetent deeply to discuss the phænomena of nature, or the science of agriculture ; nor should she indeed think it consistent to introduce scientific re

searches into a work of this kind. But a slight investigation of the simple arts by which the nourishment of man is produced, or of some of those wonders of creative power which daily present themselves to our view, cannot, in her opinion, be deemed an improper exercise of the infant faculties even at a very early age.

VISITS
TO
A FARM-HOUSE.

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CHAPTER I.

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Cows.

“WHAT a delightful morning !” exclaimed little Arthur Benson on opening his eyes, and seeing the sunshine bright into his room, “Charles, Charles,” continued he, turning to his brother who was still asleep, “let us get up directly, and we shall have time for a little walk before grandpapa and grandmamma come downstairs.” Charles obeyed the sum-

mons, and they were soon dressed. They then went into the garden, and from the garden to the field adjoining; both of them highly pleased with all they saw, for they had never slept out of London before, and the country was quite a new scene to them. "See," said Charles, "how all the cows are gathered together by that gate; and here comes old Ralph with a pail on his arm. Pray, Ralph, what do the cows want there?" "They want to be milked," said Ralph, "and through that gate is the way to the farm yard." "Are you going to milk them, and may we come with you?" enquired Arthur.

Leave being given, they tripped along by the side of the good old ser-

vant; but both stood at some distance behind when they came near the cows, as they felt rather afraid of going close to such large animals. "Why, now, masters, what is there to be afraid of?" said Ralph, who found they left off talking and suddenly shrunk back; "The cows will not hurt you if you do not hurt them." "Don't they sometimes toss people with their great horns?" asked Charles. "Here and there you may meet with a vicious beast," replied the man, "but in common they are very gentle."

Arthur. I remember my papa told me not to run in the way of the cows that we meet in London streets.

Ralph. Aye, that is a very different thing. The poor cattle are not used

to be there, so sometimes they may be frightened ; and then again the butchers are often cruel, and will beat them and drive them about, so that for what I know it may be best to keep out of their way ; but here there is nothing of that sort. I do not ill use them, and they are always quiet with me.

The little Bensons having got the better of their fears wanted to milk the cows themselves, and were surprised to find that they were not able to do it as well as Ralph ; but there are many things which are easy to those who are accustomed to do them, that one who had never tried before would find difficult.

“ Pray Ralph,” asked Arthur,

“ why has the young calf that thing full of spikes round his mouth ? See, he wants to suck the black cow, and she will not let him. Cannot you take it off ?” .

“ Oh no, master Arthur, it is time that calf should be weaned. He is old enough now to eat grass, and we want the milk for the dairy ; so we put the spikes on him, and then, as they would hurt his mother, she will not let him suck any more.”

“ Is he to be killed ?” inquired Charles.

“ Not at present,” replied the old man. “ Master means to keep him to draw in the team.”

“ To draw in the team ?”

“ Yes ; we have always a team of

oxen. You may see them ploughing in the field out yonder ; just there now," continued he, pointing with his finger, "beyond the holly hedge."

" I see them ; I see them," said Arthur. " Poor creatures ! how slow they go ! Are not they tired, Ralph ? "

" No, sir, they do not move so quick as horses ; but they are vastly stronger. And though it is not always quite so easy to manage them, yet on the whole they answer very well."

Ralph had now finished milking : and taking the little boys into the stable, he showed them a baby calf, as he called it, that was to be sold to the butcher the next day. " O you pretty little thing ! " said Arthur. " Only look, Charles, at these spots

on its back. I should like to have it for my own. Why must it be killed pray ?”

Ralph. To serve us for food, master Arthur. If we were to suffer all the beasts to live, they would eat all the grass and corn we could grow ; and then we must be starved, and you would not like that, I fancy.

Arthur. No I don't want to starve ; only I hate to have things killed.

At this moment Mr. Mansfield came into the stable.

“ We were talking about this poor calf, grandpapa,” said Charles.

“ Ralph says it is to be killed to-morrow to make veal. I am sorry for it. It has such a pretty coat !”

“It cannot be helped, my dear,” replied his grandfather. But when it is dead, do you know what will be done with its pretty coat?” The boys answered they did not. “It will be sold,” said he, “to the tanner, who is the person that dresses the skins of beasts, or *hides* as they are called; and when it is properly prepared, it makes that beautiful, smooth kind of leather, that those large books which you were looking at last night were bound with. When prepared to write upon, it is called vellum. The skins of oxen and cows make a very thick coarse leather, such as the soles of our boots and shoes.”



The Baby Calf



“And what becomes of the hair?” asked Charles.

“After the hide has been soaked for a long time,” replied Mr. Mansfield, “it comes off very easily, and is put into that kind of mortar which is used in plastering walls, in order to keep them from crumbling and falling away. Did you never see in a white wall in part broken down, a heap of short hairs, here and there perhaps a little loose piece of mortar hanging to them?”

Arthur said he had, but did not know it was cow-hair; and added, he could not have thought it would have been of any use.

“Every thing is of use, my little dear,” said Mr. Mansfield, “I doubt

if you can name a part of the cow that will not turn to some account."

"What the hoofs, grandpapa?" inquired Charles.

"Yes, Charles. The hoofs and the parings of the skin, by being boiled down to a strong jelly, make the glue which the carpenters use to stick things together

Arthur. The horns.--Oh, I know what is done with the horns. I have seen horn lanterns, and I have got a little box at home that mamma says is made of horn.

Mr. Mansfield. Very well Arthur. And you may have seen boxes, and knife-handles, and combs, and I cannot tell how many things, made of the bones of the ox. Even the dung

is of some use. It is a good manure for the land ; it is used in the process for bleaching linen ; and poor women pick it up when it is dry, and make fires of it, in order to save their coals.

CHAPTER II.

*The Dairy.*

MRS. MANSFIELD having heard how much her little grandsons had been pleased with the cows, took them after breakfast into the dairy, that they might see what was done with the milk which those useful animals give in such large quantities. The dairy was a little room with a brick floor facing the north, and kept very cool, by means of a latticed window, that let in fresh air. It was necessary to be built in that way, because heat

very soon turns milk sour. Round the room were fixed a sort of trays lined with lead, which were all filled with milk.

“Grandmamma, what is to be done with this milk?” inquired Arthur.

“It is set for cream,” answered Mrs. Mansfield; “and the cream will be made into butter.

Charles. How is butter made, pray?

Grandmamma. Come here and I will show you. The milk is poured into these trays, which are not deep, but very broad, so as to cover a large space. When it has stood some time, the cream or most greasy part, which at first is mixed with the milk, rises to the top in the manner you here see.

Then it is skimmed off with this ladle, and put into a pan by itself. This is done twice a-day, and when there is cream enough it is churned into butter.

Charles. Is there any churn here, grandmamma? Sister Kate has got a plaything churn, but I never saw an earnest one.

Mrs. Mansfield pointed to a large barrel fixed on a stand, with a winch handle to turn it, and told him that was the churn. Charles was surprised, and said it was not like his sister's.

Grandmamma. Perhaps not. Sometimes they are made like a pail, with a long stick to pull up and down; but these give less trouble, and I believe, are now more common.

Arthur. Well, grandmamma, how is this used ?

Grandmamma. The cream is put in through that little square door, which shuts quite close ; and when the churn has been turned a good while, it changes to butter.

Charles. So then butter is nothing but cream shaken about ? I should like to see it made.

Grandmamma. You cannot see it now, my dears, because Rose churned yesterday. But if you please I will give you a little cream in a phial : and that you may shake till you make it into butter.

Arthur. Oh, can we make it so ? I should like it very much indeed, if you please, ma'am.

Mrs. Mansfield then fetched a phial, and the two boys amused themselves a long time with this experiment. They found that with all their pains they could not turn the whole to butter ; and their grandmamma told them there was always some waste ; that it was called butter-milk, and given to the pigs.

Arthur and Charles quite proud of their success, went to look for Rose, that they might tell her they could make butter as well as she. They found her in the dairy, where their attention was drawn to a new circumstance. Rose was standing before a large tub, full of a white substance rather thicker than jelly, which she was very diligently employed in breaking.

They forgot the butter they had intended to boast of, and both began asking a variety of questions, which she answered with the greatest good humour.

Both the Boys. What is that for? What are you doing now Rose?

Rose. Making cheese.

Charles. Making cheese? Well, since I have been at my grandpapa's, I have seen things I never saw before.

Arthur. But how do you make it, Rose? What have you got there?

Rose. Curd.

Arthur. What is curd?

Rose. It is made from milk, master Arthur. When the cream is taken off, we take the milk and mix it with rennet, and then---

Arthur. Rennet! What is that?

Rose A sour juice that is made by boiling a part of the inside of a calf. Well, we put a little rennet to the milk, which makes it part into curds and whey. This thick white part is the curd, and the thin watery part among it is called whey.

Arthur. Is that the whey people take for a cold ?

Rose. No. That whey is made with wine instead of rennet; but the curd parts just in the same manner.

Charles. I will ask our Sally to let me look at it the next time she makes whey. But why do you break it so ?

Rose. That there may be no lumps. Now wait a little, and you shall see how I go on.

She then took a large round bag

made of coarse cloth, into which she put all the curd, and pressed it with very heavy weights, in order to squeeze out as much of the whey as she could. This done, she turned it out of the bag on a place with holes like a cullender, and, leaving it to drain, told them the cheese was finished.

“ I did not know, “ said Charles, “ it was so easy to make cheese, But what is the rind, pray ? ”

“ ‘Tis the same as the rest, ” replied Rose ; only, being left to the air, it grows hard in time. ” Then leading them into another room, she showed them a great number of cheeses, some of which were still soft, having been lately made ; whilst others that had been longer kept, were grown quite hard.

“What is the whey good for?” asked Charles as they came back through the dairy.

“We give it the pigs,” said Rose.

“So then,” said Arthur to himself as he walked away, “*butter and cheese are both made from milk; but the butter is the greasy part, and the cheese is the curdy part.*”

“Yes, master Arthur,” said Rose, “you are very right, for that is our way of making butter and cheese in this country; but in many places, where they make richer cheese, they use the milk without skimming off the cream; and to make good cream cheese, the cream only is used when skimmed from the milk.”





The Fairy.

CHAPTER III.

*The Pigs.*

WHEN dinner-time came, it happened that there were brought to table some custards and gooseberry tarts, of which Charles was tempted to eat very greedily. He had already been twice helped, and the servant was going to carry away a piece of tart that had been left in the dish, when Charles, not satisfied whilst any remained, stopped him, and once more filled his plate with it.

The footman stared, and his grandpapa and grandmamma looked at him with surprize, but said nothing.

In the evening Mr. Mansfield led his grandsons into the yard, just at the time the man was giving the pigs their supper. Arthur and Charles were diverted at the eagerness with which the whole family squeaked and grunted over their food, which they devoured with the utmost haste, treading over one another as they scrambled for a share.

Oh grandpapa," exclaimed Charles, "how droll it is to see the pigs eat! Look there! look there! One has got a cabbage leaf, and the other wants it. Now it has got it away, and

it eats it as fast as ever it can. And now it is come for more. I dare say they will soon empty the trough."

"Perhaps so," replied his grand-papa smiling. Pigs are as fond of cabbage leaves and bean stalks, as little boys are of gooseberry pie."

Charles blushed.

"Hey, Charles!" continued he, putting his hand upon his head so as to look full in his face, "this is not the first time to-day I thought I had a pig for my companion. Do you know any body that ate voraciously, and at last *emptied the dish?*"

Charles softly answered, "Yes, sir."

"Well, I believe he is ashamed of it," said Mr. Mansfield; "I only advise him another time to be more

upon his guard, for fear we should take him for a pig."

As they were sauntering about, a sow with a fine litter of pigs at her heels came across the yard.

"Pray, sir," asked Arthur, "how many pigs can a sow have at once?"

"From ten to twenty," said Mr. Mansfield. But, as she has not milk enough to suckle so many, she casts off some, and seldom brings up above twelve."

Arthur. What food do they like best?

Grandpapa. Oh, they are not very difficult. They will eat almost any kind of rubbish and offal; but vegetables of all sorts are best for them. Cabbage stalks, potatoe parings, bean

and pea shells, they like very well ; and it is a good way to turn them out in the forests, where they meet with plenty of acorns and mast nuts that grow upon beach trees. With their long snouts they likewise turn up the ground, that they may get at the roots of plants, to prevent which we are obliged to have a ring thrust through their noses, otherwise they would do us a great deal of mischief.

Charles. Are they of much use, grandpapa ?

Grandpapa. Not whilst they are alive. When dead, the flesh, you know is eaten, and is called pork, or bacon if salted in a particular manner. The lard, or some of the fat, is used in making many sorts of plasters, and

the bristles are formed into brushes of various kinds; and are also used by shoemakers and others in sewing of leather in the stead of needles.

Arthur. I like *little pigs* much better than I do the great old ones.

Grandpapa. I cannot say the hog is a favourite animal with me. He is not only ugly, but his habits of life are disagreeable. You may have remarked that he is very fond of grunting in the mire. Neither his grunting, nor his squeaking is pleasant music; and the whole race are so voracious in their appetite, that if they have food enough they will eat till they are too heavy to stand on their legs; even then they will lay on their sides, and eat still; and sometimes



The Pigs.



the sow will go so far as to devour her own young.

Arthur. Indeed ? The unnatural brute !

Grandpapa. I should have told you that their stomach is made very large so as to require an unusual quantity of food. But if we are disgusted with the manners of a hog, we should be careful not to imitate them ; as filth, gluttony, and want of natural affection, must surely be ten times more shocking in a creature like man, who is blessed with reason.

CHAPTER IV.

*Sheep-shearing.*

THE following day being appointed for sheap-shearing, a number of men and lads assembled at an early hour in the great barn. Arthur and Charles went with their grandpapa to see the process, and were greatly pleased with the hurry and bustle of the scene. The sheep was penned in a fold close to the barn, from whence they were fetched by the lads one by one, as fast as the shearers were ready for them. A few days before, they had all been

washed in a stream that ran through one of the meadows, so that their fleeces were beautifully white, and they were so thick as to make the animals appear almost twice as large as they really were.

Arthur remarked with surprize, that the poor creatures were perfectly quiet during the time of their being shorn; although they struggled with terror when they were first brought out, and bleated most piteously as soon as they were set at liberty.

He wondered at the ease with which the men laid them on the ground, and afterwards turned them over from side to side, as was necessary in the course of the operation. After watching one of the shearers

for some time he began the following conversation with him.

Arthur. Good man, does not it hurt the sheep to be pulled about in that way ?

The man. They don't like it, perhaps; but I try to hurt them as little as I can.

Arthur. Are you not afraid of cutting them with the shears, when you put them down into the middle of the wool ?

The Man. We take pretty good care to feel our way, but now and then to be sure they get an unlucky snip. That man there, that stands by the door, has some tar that he puts to them if they chance to be hurt.

Arthur. Poor things ! how cold

they must feel when they lose such a quantity of wool !

The Man. It is time they should be shorn now, master. This is their winter coat, as one may say ; and if it was left much longer, by little and little it would fall off of itself.

Arthur. Then why don't you let it come off of itself, instead of taking all this trouble, and teasing the sheep for nothing ?

The Man. My service to you, sir ! What, are we to lose the wool, or to follow the sheep from place to place wherever they choose to stray, in order to gather it after them ? No, no ; they may suffer a little at first, but if the weather is warm they get over it presently.

Arthur. How many can you shear in a day, good man ?

The Man. Why, fifty, more or less. The quickest hands can finish one in ten minutes.

Charles during this time, was helping a little girl to pick up the loose locks of wool that were scattered over the floor. His brother turned round, and saw that he was employed. What should *he* do ? Every one was busy besides himself, and he could not bear to be the only idle person. A message came to fetch away one of the women, whose task it was to roll up the fleeces and pile them together on a heap. Arthur offered to take her place, and, after a few trials, learned to tie them up very dexterously. He





Sheep Shearing

continued at this employment for some time, and rejoiced to find himself of some use.

Mr. Mansfield at length called the two boys to go away. They immediately obeyed; and Charles, taking hold of his grandpapa's hand, asked him if he did not think a sheep-shearing was a most charming thing.

Grandpapa. It does very well in its season, my dear boy. Wool is so useful, that the shearing-time always gives me pleasure.

Arthur. What shall you do with it, grandpapa?

Grandpapa. I shall sell it to the wool-stapler; and, after it has passed through the hands of different manufacturers, you may perhaps meet with

it again in some shop; though so altered as not to be known for the same. It will then be in the shape of flannel, worsted, cloth, or perhaps some kind of stuff.

“That is all very droll,” said Charles. “But when will there be another sheep-shearing, grandpapa?”

“Not till this day twelvemonth, my dear. Wool does not grow very fast. In two or three weeks you will see the sheep covered with a little short wool; and the traces of the shears will then be worn away. As winter comes on, it grows thicker and longer, but that is not a time to rob them of their fleece. At last the year will come round, and then they will be again ready for the shearer.”

“I am fond of sheep,” said Arthur;

“and I like little lambs, they look
“so innocent.”

Grandpapa. They are gentle, timid creatures, and require the care of man more than almost any other animal; as they have neither strength to defend themselves when attacked by their enemies, nor swiftness to run from danger.

Arthur. And so they pay us for the care we take of them, by letting us have the wool?

Grandpapa. Indeed they do, Arthur; but not by their wool alone, for they are useful in more ways than one. Mutton, which you know is the flesh of the sheep, is one of the most wholesome meat we have; some parts of the fat are melted down

to make tallow. The skin is sometimes made into parchment, and sometimes into leather, for gloves, shoes, and other things: and parts of the guts are twisted into strings for musical instruments.

Charles. What enemies have sheep, grandpapa? You say they can't defend themselves against their enemies.

Grandpapa. Wherever there are wild beasts, Charles, they have many enemies, as they all prey upon the sheep. Eagles will attack young lambs; so will foxes; and even dogs if they are fierce, and not properly trained.

Arthur. But I have often seen a dog along with a flock of sheep.

Grandpapa. Yes; the breed that is

called the shepherd's dog is very useful in managing them. They seldom bite, but will fetch those back that are gone astray, and, by barking at them alone, guide the whole flock much more easily than a man could do. When they have done their business, you may see them come back to the shepherd, and follow him as quietly as possible.

In the evening there was a supper provided to refresh the shearers after their hard day's work, consisting of legs of mutton, and plum-puddings, with plenty of good ale. All was jollity and merriment. During the day a constant buz of many voices might have been heard even at some distance from the barn, but the business they

were engaged in did not allow time for much talk. Now, on the contrary, that they had nothing to do but to divert themselves, every tongue was heard. They told merry stories without end, sang songs, and drank to the health of their kind master. Mr. Mansfield himself staid with them for some time, encouraging them to be cheerful, and walking about to see that every body was helped. At length he left the party attended by his grandchildren, who immediately retired to rest, highly satisfied with the pleasures of the day.

CHAPTER V.

*A walk through the Fields.*

The next morning Mr. Mansfield asked the little boys if they were disposed for a walk. Arthur replied that he should like it very much; but Charles said he had rather stay at home with his grandmamma: and accordingly they set off without him.

“What pretty purple flowers grow in that field!” remarked Arthur, when they had proceeded a little way. “Pray, grandpapa, what are they?”

“That is a field of clover,” replied Mr. Mansfield; “and it will soon be cut for hay.”

Arthur. I never saw such pretty hay as that.

Grandpapa. Oh, there will be no beauty in it. On the contrary, it looks much coarser and browner than what is made of common grass, which is called meadow hay.

Arthur. What become of the flowers, then?

Grandpapa. They dry and wither away. You do not suppose they would live when cut down. Did you ever see hay made?

Arthur. Yes, a great many times. A number of men and women go into

a field and turn the grass, and then they put it into cocks, and then they make a stack of it.

Grandpapa. Why do they do all that?

Arthur. To make it into hay.

Grandpapa. Yes. But why does turning it about make grass into hay?

Arthur said he did not know.

Grandpapa. Then I will tell you. The grass when cut down is full of moisture. If you squeeze a blade in your fingers they will be damp; and that dampness is called sap. Now, while the sap is in it the grass will not keep. If you were to make it into a stack it would soon rot, and smell so putrid you would not like to go near it. But when you turn it about to the

sun and the wind, till the sap is dried away, there is no more danger, and you may stack it, and keep it for a very long time.

Arthur. But if I had a field, grandpapa, I would never make hay. My horses should go in and eat the grass when they wanted it, and I would save myself the trouble of working for them.

Grandpapa. I am afraid, Arthur, you would make a lazy farmer. Do not you know that nothing in this world is to be had without trouble? and if you are so very sparing of your pains, I fear you will not succeed very well.

Arthur. Why not, pray, sir?

Grandpapa. Did you ever take notice of the grass in the winter?

Arthur. Yes; I believe it is then short and black.

Grandpapa. The blackness is nothing but the earth which you see among it; as it is very thin at that time of the year. And did you ever observe a field just before it was cut for hay?

Arthur. Oh yes. Do you know, grandpapa; we all took a walk in a field a little while ago; and the grass was so long it came up to the top of my legs; and little Kate cried, and could not get on at all!

Grandpapa. You see then that as there is much grass in summer and but little in winter, your horses at one time would have more than they could eat, and at another they would

starve. Yet this would be owing to your own fault: for God gives enough for the whole year; and all he requires of us is, that we should in the season of plenty lay up for the time of need.

CHAPTER VI.

*The Walk continued.*

THE next field they came to was sown with rye, which Mr. Mansfield observed was a species of corn, and, although much coarser than wheat, was frequently made into bread, and formed in many places the chief food of the poor. He desired his grandson to gather an ear or two, that he might learn to distinguish between that and barley, which grew in a field through which they were next to pass.

Arthur pulled up a root of rye, and

then ran to overtake his grandfather, who by this time had got over the stile, and was slowly crossing the barley field.

“ Well, Arthur, what difference do you find in the growth of these two kinds of corn ? ” asked Mr. Mansfield.

Arthur. Indeed, grandpapa, I don’t see any, except that the rye grows very high; as high as the top of your hat, and that the barley only comes to my elbow.

Mr. Mansfield. That is one difference, to be sure. Examine them well, and perhaps you may discover some other.

Arthur. Oh yes, sir. The spikes of the rye are neither so fine nor so long as in the barley.

Mr. Mansfield. Very true again. So you see you need never mistake between them. The straw of the rye is the longest, but the beard (for you should not call it the spikes) is shorter and coarser.

Arthur. I think the long beard of the barley gives it rather a silky look as it waves about with the wind. Pray, grandpapa, is barley sown to make bread too?

Mr. Mansfield. Sometimes it is used for that purpose; but the greatest part of what we grow in England is for making beer.

Arthur. Beer! Is it possible that barley can make beer? Do you know how it is done?

Mr. Mansfield. Yes; and you shall

hear if you wish to know. All grain is the seed of the plant; and before it can be put to any use it must be taken out of the ear. Now, to do that, it is thrashed with an instrument called a flail. I suppose you have seen one, have you not?

Arthur. I remember once passing at some distance from a barn, where a man was swinging something about that looked like a bent stick? and he beat the ground with it, and somebody said he was thrashing

Mr. Mansfield. That he certainly was. The corn was spread upon the barn-floor, and he was beating out the grain with a flail. The next business is to separate it from the chaff, or outside skin. This is sometimes

done by turning a machine very quickly so as to cause a wind, which blows away the chaff, for it is as light as a feather. A more simple method is, to throw the corn across from one side of the barn to the other, against the wind. The chaff, being so light, is soon blown back, whilst the corn goes on a little further, and falls in a heap by itself.

Arthur. But, dear grandpapa, what has this to do with making beer?

Mr. Mansfield. All in good time, my dear boy. You must *get at* the barley before you can *use* it, must not you? The method of winnowing I have described, relates, it is true, principally to wheat (for barley is without chaff); but the barley must be

thrashed, and separated from the ear; after which it is put for some days into a cistern of water. It is then taken out and laid in heaps; when it ferments, and is ready to shoot out in the same manner as if sown in the ground. Afterwards it is spread thinly over a floor, and frequently turned; and when partly dry is carried to a kiln, a kind of oven, where the drying is completed. Having passed through all this process it is called malt, and the man whose business it is to do it is termed a maltster.

Arthur. I thought brewers made beer?

Mr. Mansfield. You were right. Brewers buy malt. They grind it, and then pour hot water upon it, to get out its strength and goodness. The

liquor thus obtained, which is sweet-wort, becomes the most valuable part of the commodity ; for the malt has lost its virtue, and is called grains, and only used to feed pigs and cattle. The wort is afterwards boiled with hops, which give it a bitterish taste instead of a sickly sweet, and keep it wholesome and good. Then it takes the name of beer ; and after fermenting for a little while may be put into casks and kept for use. And now, Arthur, do you think that you understand brewing ? Shall you recollect that malt is barley prepared in a particular way ? and that beer is made by pouring warm water on the malt, and afterwards boiling it with hops ?

Arthur. I think I shall, grandpapa.

CHAPTER VII.

*The Pony.*

As Mr. Mansfield and Arthur were returning from their walk, in a lane at a little distance from the house they were met by Charles, who had mounted upon a pony belonging to his grandfather, which had taken fright and was running away at full speed. Mr. Mansfield stopped it by catching hold of the bridle ; and as soon as he was satisfied that no mischief had happened, and Charles was sufficiently recovered to be able to talk, he in-

quired what had led him to try his skill in horsemanship?

“Why, grandpapa,” replied Charles, “Robert had just come home upon the pony, and left him at the gate; and I wanted to ride; so I got upon him, and then he ran away with me.”

“*Mr. Mansfield.* As you have never been used to riding, my dear Charles, you had better not get upon strange horses when you are alone. I wonder that Plover should run away, too; he is in general very gentle.

Charles. At first he would keep his head over the gate, and I could not get him to move. So I hit him with a stick I had in my hand, and that set him off in a gallop.

Mr. Mansfield. I fancy all was

owing to your want of skill? for Plover is a very quiet creature, and easily managed; but he will not bear ill usage; therefore, if you beat him much, I am not surprised at the accident.

Arthur. I am sure, grandpapa, Charles did not mean to be cruel, and use the horse ill.

Mr. Mansfield. He is so good a boy that I do not suspect him of it; and I only meant to give him a caution against another time. No, my dear children, I hope you will never take pleasure in wanton cruelty. My heart has often ached at the barbarities I have seen practised on poor dumb creatures.

Arthur. Once when I was walking

with papa, we saw a man beating a horse about the head with the butt end of his whip, and my papa advised him not to do so ; but he said it was his own horse, and he had a right to do as he would with it.

Mr. Mansfield. Nothing can give a man a right to be cruel. We may it is true, make what use we please of our beasts, as long as we treat them well, for they were made in part for our convenience ; but God Almighty has given to them life and feeling the same as he has to us ; and we make him angry with us whenever we use them ill.

“ I often think, grandpapa, that it is very strange such large creatures

as those," said Arthur, patting Plover, who was now walking quietly by the side of his master, "should suffer us to get upon their backs, and manage them as we please. They are much stronger than we are ; and I wonder they do not drive us away, and not carry us, and draw our coaches, and do every thing that we like."

Mr. Mansfield. It would be astonishing, Arthur, if we did not consider that our reason gives us a great advantage over all brutes. Some of them, it is true, are much larger; some much stronger, and others swifter than we; but by means of our understanding we can conquer the strongest, and tame the fiercest of them.





Charles on the Pony.

Charles. How do you mean, pray, sir ?

Mr. Mansfield. I mean, my dear boy, that we make use of methods which they cannot resist. Plover is stronger than you, but a boy of your size who understands riding would be able to manage him. He would pull the bridle on this side, or on that side, according as he wished him to turn ; and as he pulled, the bit would hurt the horse's mouth, just enough to make him willing to go where he was wanted : therefore, by our knowing how to make a bit and a bridle, we are more than a match for a horse in spite of his great strength.

Arthur. I understand you, grand-papa. And I have something to tell

you. As we were walking along a little while ago, a dog came barking and snapping, and I thought he was going to bite me ; but my mamma called out, “ Don’t be frightened, Arthur, pick up a stone to throw at the dog, and it will send him away.” So I did, and to be sure he slunk off at once. Now was not it my reason that made me conquer the dog, though the dog could bite harder than I ?

Mr. Mansfield. Exactly so. You see, then, that although our bodies are naturally weak and helpless, yet by our reason we are furnished with the means of strength and defence. So God has ordained it ; and therefore, though he will not suffer us to be cruel to any of his creatures, yet as

our Bible tells us, he said at the beginning of the world, that the fear and the dread of man should be for ever upon all animals.

As Mr. Mansfield finished these words, they reached the stable yard, and Ralph came forward to unharness the pony.

“Plover must be shod to-morrow, sir,” said he as he looked at one of his hinder feet.

Is not it cruel, grandpapa,” asked Charles, “to drive nails into the horse’s feet?”

Mr. Mansfield. No, my dear. The nails only go into the hoofs, which are very hard, and have not any feeling; but if we did not put on these iron shoes, the hoofs, hard as they

are, would soon be battered to pieces, when they travel over rough and gravelled ground.

Arthur. Dead horses are of no use; are they?

Mr. Mansfield. Their flesh is only given to dogs, but the skin, when converted into leather, is used for making harness and other things.

CHAPTER VIII.

*A Visit to the Windmill.*

“ Do you know, my dear,” said Mrs. Mansfield to her husband, when they were sitting at tea, “ the miller has forgotten to send home the flour he promised to let us have last week, and Sarah has just told me we have not enough in the house to bake to-morrow ! So what must we do ? Can you spare one of the men to go over and inquire about it ? ”

“ I am afraid, my dear,” said Mr. Mansfield, “ they are all busy at pre-

sent, but when Ralph comes in he may go of the errand.

“ It has just occurred to me,” rejoined Mrs. Mansfield, “ that if you are disposed for another walk this fine evening, you might go yourself and take the children with you ; and that would be a nice treat for them, for I know they have never seen a mill.”

“ Ah, do go, grandpapa ; will you grandpapa ? it will be so very delightful !” said both the boys at the same instant.

“ Well, bring me my hat then,” said their indulgent grandfather. “ I had not intended to have stirred again to-night ; but if it will give you pleasure, my dear boys——”

“Thank you, sir! thank you, sir!” cried Charles, running for the hat.

“I hope you won’t be tired though,” said Arthur. You shall rest upon my shoulder all the way; and do not be afraid of leaning all your weight upon me, for I shall be able to bear it very well.”

You shall have my shoulder to rest upon too,” exclaimed Charles; “So I daresay you will not be tired.”

“Indeed,” replied Mr. Mansfield, putting one hand upon the shoulder of each, as he rose from the chair, “with two such good little supporters, I shall not be easily fatigued.”

As they were walking, Charles expressed his joy that they were going to see the inside of a mill which was

what he had long wished to do.

And, pray," inquired he, " what is it like?"

Mr. Mansfield. That you will see when you get there: in the meantime, Arthur, examine this wheat. I showed you barley and rye in the morning.

There is no beard to this," said Arthur.

Mr Mansfield. No ; and the ear is heavier and larger. Gather one, and count the number of grains it contains.

Charles pulled violently, and drew up a root that had seven stalks growing from it.

Hold, you wasteful little fellow !" cried his grandpapa. " I did not tell you to root up my field at one stroke, Let me see, however. Observe what a wonderful increase here is. These

seven stalks have all sprung from one single grain, and each ear contains, perhaps, twenty grains; which gives us in all a hundred and forty grains instead of one."

Arthur. That is astonishing, indeed! So there always grows a hundred and forty times as much wheat as is sown?

Mr. Mansfield. No, no, I did not say that. In this instance it is so, and sometimes it may even happen to produce more; but a great deal of seed rots in the ground, without ever growing at all; of what does come up, some is spoilt before it is ripe and the ears that come to perfection do not all yield so well as these. I believe, therefore, that taking the kingdom through-

out, we only gather about eight times the quantity we sow.

Arthur. How long is wheat growing, pray, sir?

Mr. Mansfield. Nine or ten months for the most part. No sooner is the harvest of one year got in, than we begin to prepare for that of the ensuing one. We plough the land, and sow it again immediately. Some seed, indeed, is not sown before the spring, but that never produces quite such good crops.

Charles. What is the use of ploughing, grandpapa?

Mr. Mansfield. To break up the earth, which would otherwise get so hard that no corn could grow in it. When a field has been ploughed, a

man walks over it, and scatters the seed all over the field. Then it is raked in by an instrument full of great iron teeth, called a harrow. Care must afterwards be taken to keep it free from weeds, but besides that nothing more can be done. It is left for the rain to water, and the sun to ripen it.

Charles. And when it is quite ripe, then the harvest comes, does not it?

Mr. Mansfield. Yes. Then the reapers go into the field, and cut down the corn with their sickles. They tie it up in bundles called sheaves, and it is carried into our barns, and thrashed out for use.

As they were conversing in this manner they arrived at the mill; and when Mr. Mansfield had given his

orders, he asked leave to shew his grandchildren over it. He then explained to them, how the sails, being turned round by the wind, were the occasion of turning different wheels in the inside of the building. He next pointed out to them two large flat stones, shut up in a kind of box. "You may see," said he, "that all the corn is made to pass between these stones. The under stone is fixed; but the upper one turns round, and presses so heavily upon it, as to bruise and grind the corn to powder."

"I understand you, grandpapa," returned Charles. "And is that all that is done here?"

Mr. Mansfield. Not all, Charles; for the corn, though ground into meal





The Mill.

wants sifting. To do that there is a contrivance called a bolting engine, and you may look at it if you step this way.

Mr. Mansfield then opened a little door in the large wooden box, or bin, that contained the engine; when a quantity of fine flour flew out into their faces, and powdered them all over. The boulder was made of framework, five or six feet long, round which a canvass was tightly strained “Now,” said Mr. Mansfield, “the meal is put into this bolting machine, which turns round, you see, very fast when the mill is at work. The quickness of its motion causes the fine flour to fly off through the canvass; but the coarse and husky part, which

is bran, not being able to do that, falls to the bottom by itself. The use of shutting it up in this box, is to prevent the flour from being scattered over the mill."

The Bensons and their grandfather remained at the mill till they had thoroughly examined every part of it. They received much pleasure from seeing the different wheels and contrivances, and were diverted to find, when they came away, that they were so covered with flour as to look almost as white as millers.

As they were returning home, Arthur remarked, that having first seen the wheat growing, and afterwards seen it ground, they only wanted to know how flour was made into bread,

to understand the whole process from beginning to end.

Mr. Mansfield replied, that he could easily explain that to them. That the flour was mixed with a proper quantity of water, and a little yeast put in to make it rise. "This," said he, "is well kneaded together, and then it is baked in an oven."

"But what is yeast?" inquired Charles.

Mr. Mansfield. A scum that rises on the top of new-made beer.

Arthur. Have not I seen to-day some of all the different kinds of corn that grow here?

Mr. Mansfield. I do not recollect our having met with any oats. They do not grow in one compact ear like

the rest, for every grain has a separate little foot-stalk to itself. In this part of the country they are chiefly given to horses; but in Scotland, and the north of England, oatmeal cakes are frequently eaten instead of bread.

“And now,” continued he, “I am not sorry to find myself near home. You, Arthur, may likewise be glad to rest yourself, for you have been stumping about almost all day.”

The boys declared they were not at all tired, and thanked their grand-papa for the pleasure he had procured them.

CHAPTER IX.

*Poultry.*

“Grandmamma, where are you going?” asked little Charles one morning, on seeing his grandmother walk out at the garden door.

“To feed my chickens, my love,” returned she.

“Then I will come with you,” said Charles. “And so will I,” said Arthur: and he threw down his peg-top in a corner.

“My speckled hen,” said Mrs. Mansfield, “came off her nest yesterday, with a fine brood of chickens

Arthur. That is the one, is not it; that has been sitting so close ever since we came ?

Grandmamma. Yes, and for a fortnight before, which makes in all three weeks ; the time hens always sit on their eggs.

Charles. I think they must be tired of keeping still so long.

Grandmamma. I believe, Charles, *you* would be tired of such confinement; but birds do not seem to mind it at all. Though so active at other times ; when they have laid their eggs, they are quite contented to sit still till the young ones are hatched.

Arthur. Do all birds sit for three weeks, grandmamma !

Grandmamma. No : ducks and geese sit for a month ; and pigeons and smaller birds for about a fortnight. Now you may give them some of these grits, and then you will have the pleasure of seeing them peck.

Charles. Let me have a handful. Chick, chick, chick, chick ! come here, poor chickey, and I will give you something to eat. Dear grandmamma ! they will not let me catch them ; and look at the old hen, she is almost ready to fly at me.

Grandmamma. She is afraid you are going to hurt her chickens, when she sees you run after them. Hens are often very fierce, if any one offers to meddle with their young ones.

Charles. Well then, poor things ! I will not take you up in my hand, but I will give you your food on the ground. How pretty they look ! They are the colour of my canary bird.

Arthur. I see the old hen does not eat much herself. She only pecks about the grits, to show them to her chickens.

Grandmamma. She is a very good mother ; so we will give her some barley. That is the best food for the old ones.

Arthur. See, Charles, how oddly they drink ! They turn up their heads whenever they swallow.

Grandmamma. By that means they let the water trickle down their throats.

Arthur. Then why do not we do so when we drink ?

Grandmamma. Because our throats are not formed the same as birds' ; for we are provided with a muscle, which carries down the liquor by its motion.

Charles. How the pretty creatures creep under their mother's wings ! and she puffs her feathers out, and makes herself so large as to cover them all.

Grandmamma. You see how Providence has provided for the welfare of all creatures. Whilst they are too young to take care of themselves, he gives to the parent a strong affection towards them, and wisdom sufficient to bring them up. The mother, though in common timorous, and easily frightened, to preserve her young

ones will boldly turn round and face danger. You remarked that the hen forgot her own hunger, when she was teaching the little chickens to peck; and now she covers them with her wings to keep them from the cold, which, as they are not completely fledged, would probably kill them if it were not for her care.

Charles. And what will she do when these little things are grown as big as she is?

Grandmamma. Long before that she will have cast them off. Brutes never care for their young when they are able to shift for themselves.

Arthur. That is very different from us. I do not think my mamma will cast us off as long as she lives,

Grandmamma. I do not think she will. And I hope, my dear boys, that in return you will never neglect *her*. A chicken, you see, could not be reared unless the hen took care of it; but a child requires constant attention for many years; and even when grown up, the fondness of the parents still continues. Surely, then, nothing can excuse ingratitude and undutifulness towards them.

Arthur. No, grandmamma: so for the future I will always mind what my papa and mamma say to me; and I will try never to do any thing that I think they won't like.

Grandmamma. That is a very good resolution, and I hope you will keep

to it.—Well, Charles, what do you say to the pigeons? They are pretty birds, are they not?

Charles. Indeed, ma'am, they are. I was looking to see them fall head over heels, when they are up in the air.

Grandmamma. Those are tumblers, that fly in that way. There are many different kinds of pigeons. The white ones out there, with tails that stand up somewhat like a hen's, are called fan-tails.

Arthur. What must we feed the pigeons with?

Grandmamma. You may give them a few tares, if you like it; but here we have no occasion to supply them with





The Poultry Yard.

much food, for they come down to the barn doors, and pick up the corn that is scattered about.

Charles. Are all those one brood, that sit together on the top of that cart-house?

Grandmamma. No. Pigeons never lay more than two eggs at one time, and the pair that are hatched commonly continue mates to one another all their lives.

Charles. Now let us look at the ducks and geese. The pond is nearly covered with them.

Arthur. How very small some of them are! I should have thought that they were too young to be able to swim.

Grandmamma. Oh, they take to the water as soon as they leave the egg-shell. They are web-footed, and that enables them to swim.

Charles. What is being web-footed?

Grandmamma. Having a skin to fill up all the space between the toes. When they swim, they paddle, or strike with their broad feet against the water; which gives them a motion onwards.

Arthur. I suppose, grandmamma, you keep poultry for the sake of eating them?

Grandmamma. You are right. But do you know what is done with the feathers?

Charles. No.

Arthur. I do, though. Beds and pillows are stuffed with them.

Grandmamma. And what use is made of the long quill feathers, that grow in the goose's wing?

Arthur I never was told.

Grandmamma. The quill part, by being cut into shape, is converted into pens for writing.

Charles. Is it only geese that furnish pens?

Grandmamma. Some people write with crow-quills: but they are too small for a bold hand; so that they are very little used. The quills of the turkey are too hard; and those of ducks and chickens, on the contrary,

are much too soft. Swan quills, however, make excellent pens ; but they are too scarce to be in general use.

CHAPTER X.

*The Deer.*

In the neighbourhood of Mr. Mansfield resided a Mr. Ashley, a gentleman of large fortune, and of a very obliging disposition. As he had heard that Arthur and Charles Benson were staying at their grandpapa's, he sent for them one day to play with his son William, a little boy who was nearly of their own age. William took his companions into the park, where they amused themselves for some time by playing at trap-ball. The game was

at last suddenly broken off by master Ashley, who threw down the bat upon the ground, exclaiming that his pretty tame fawn was coming in sight, and that he must go and stroke it. The Bensons were rather sorry to be interrupted in their play; but, as they had been early taught, that it was often necessary to give up their own inclinations to the wishes of others, they left off with the utmost good humour.

“Look at the pretty creature!” said William Ashley, caressing the fawn.

“I wish I had a bit of bread here. It would eat it out of my hand.”

“I have found a piece of biscuit in the corner of my pocket,” said Charles.

“Here it is. I will feed it myself, if you please.”

“How old is he? inquired Arthur.

“Six weeks, or two months, I do not recollect which,” replied William. “But see, here comes the mother! I thought she could not be far off, for does never desert their young ones until the end of the summer.”

The little party were still admiring the fawn, when Mr. Ashley came, and told them that dinner was almost ready.

“We will come, papa,” said William, “as soon as we have done counting the spots upon my little fawn’s back.”

“Pray,” inquired Charles, “are all deer spotted?”

Mr. Ashley. No : their colour is various. Some are of a reddish cast, some of a deep brown, some white, and others spotted like these. Observe the herd that are feeding under those trees, and you will see a great difference amongst them.

“ And those,” said Arthur, “ have all fine branching horns.”

“ They are stags, ” returned Mr. Ashley. “ The does are the females, and never have any horns. But perhaps you did not know that even stags are without, for a part of every year ?”

Arthur. Indeed, sir, I did not, and shall be obliged to you if you will tell me about it.

Mr. Ashley. Towards the latter end of February, stags shed their horns, and soon after fresh ones begin to grow. These are at first very tender; and the flies, when they are in that state, are often extremely teasing to the poor animals. Whilst the horns are off, they separate from each other, and endeavour to hide themselves from every other creature, as they are then incapable of making any defence; but in about three months, when the new ones have grown to their full size, they associate together again in large herds.

They now entered the dining-parlour, and the conversation was interrupted by the inquiries which Mrs.

Ashley made, after the health of Mr. and Mrs. Mansfield : but soon after dinner, William renewed the subject, by asking his father, whether he might be permitted the next season to hunt with the stag hounds ?

Mr. Ashley replied, that he was much too young ; and then turning to Charles. he asked him if it was his wish also to be a sportsman ?

“ Indeed, Sir,” returned Charles, “ I don’t thoroughly understand what you mean by a sportsman ; and I never wished nor thought about it.”

“ Oh, a sportsman,” said William, “ is a man who is fond of hunting and shooting, and other field sports ; and if you knew what they were, I

I am sure you would like them, for I think they must be the greatest pleasures of life."

"In what way do they hunt?" inquired Arthur.

William. Why ' a stag is turned out into the country, and then, fly where he will, a whole pack of dogs follow him in full cry; and a number of gentlemen, mounted on fine horses, gallop after with the greatest possible speed; and they don't mind what they come to; for they leap over gates, and hedges, and ditches, and ride down hills that are almost as steep as precipices; and at last, when the stag can run no further, he is caught by the dogs, who kill him sometimes, but

sometimes his life is saved, that he may be hunted again another day.

“What a cruel diversion !” exclaimed Arthur, shocked at the thought of what the stag must suffer.

“I am sure I could never take pleasure in tormenting a poor animal in that way.”

“We huntsmen do not think of the *poor animals*,” returned Mr Ashley.

“Perhaps not, my dear,” said his wife; “but your want of thought will not prevent them from feeling pain and terror; and I must own, I am always surprized when men of humanity join in such barbarous sports.”

“Do you hunt any thing besides deer ?” asked Charles.

Mr. Ashley. Yes, foxes and hares; the former with fox-hounds, and the latter with harriers.

Arthur. Pray, sir, are deer ever wild in this country?

Mr. Ashley. Not the kind that we have in our parks, which are fallow deer; but there is another species, properly called stags, somewhat larger, and differing in a few particulars, that are wild in our forests. I do not mean that every body has a right to take them; for they are accounted the property of the king.

William. I forget, papa, where you told me that fallow deer were first brought from.

Mr. Ashley. It is said, they came originally from Bengal: but they were

brought here from Norway by king James the First: and England is now more famous for venison than any other country in the world.

Charles. Is any use made of the skins, pray, sir ?

Mr. Ashley. Yes; the skin both of the buck and doe makes the soft thick leather, of which gentlemen's riding breeches and gloves are made. The horns are very hard and solid, and make excellent handles for knives and other utensils. They likewise contain a salt, called salt of hartshorn, from which is extracted spirit of hartshorn.

Mrs. Ashley. How should you like to go to Lapland, and ride over the snow in a sledge drawn by rein deer ?

Charles. By rein deer ma'am? What, have deer strength to draw carriages?

Mr. Ashley. The rein deer, my love, is a very extraordinary creature. It inhabits Lapland, and other cold countries, and answers to the inhabitants the purpose of most of the animals we have here. It serves them instead of a horse, and draws their sledges with amazing swiftness over the frozen country. It supplies them with milk and cheese, instead of the cow; and answers the purpose of the sheep, in furnishing them with a warm kind of covering.

Providence, who has thus formed the rein deer capable of supplying the numerous wants of man, has pro-

vided, with wonderful care, for its support. That dreary country, where no grass will grow and not a herb, which we are accustomed to see, is nevertheless covered all over with a species of white moss, which serves as food for that valuable animal. This is its only pasture ; and it gets at it in winter, by scratching away the snow with its hinder legs.

Arthur. Is the rein deer good to eat, pray, ma'am ?

Mrs. Ashley. It is. So, when it has lived about sixteen years, the Laplander generally kills him for the sake of his flesh and his skin.

CHAPTER XI.

*The Pheasantry.*

MR. ASHLEY'S pleasure-grounds were very extensive; and in one corner of the park he had inclosed four or five acres of land, for the sake of keeping rare and curious birds.

Early in the afternoon, he proposed to his young visitors to take a walk to the pheasantry, as it was called : an offer which they gladly accepted. They entered the enclosure by going through a pretty cottage, where an old man lived who had the care of the birds.

The cottage was deserted ; but outside the back door they found Maddox asleep in a chair, and his little grand-daughter Peggy hard at work by his side.

Peggy rose and curtsied in a very pretty manner. Then having roused the old man, by telling him that 'squire Ashley was come, she sat down again to her needle. But master William, who was very fond of her, begged she would leave her work while they stayed; and look after the birds with them. On a grass plot, close to the cottage, there were three or four hens under baskets ! and they had each a little brood belonging to them, which the Bensons mistook for bantams. But Peggy

said they were young pheasants, whose eggs they often set under hens, as they made the best mothers of any fowl.

“Are these *all* we are to see?” inquired Arthur.

“No, Sir,” replied Peggy; “we have many that are full grown; only they are now scattered about, and hid among the bushes. I’ll call them though.”

She then fetched out a pan with some of their food, which she scattered over the grass, calling at the same time in a particular manner. Presently several pheasants came from their hiding-places. They were rather shy at first; but by degrees they ventured nearer and nearer, and

at last began to eat the food that was thrown to them. The boys admired the beauty of the birds. The plumage of some was of a fine gold colour, variegated with streaks of purple and green. These they learnt were called gold pheasants. The silver pheasants were very handsome, although not quite so showy. They were of a clear white, streaked likewise with purple on the neck and breast. The common pheasant was not quite equal in beauty to those already mentioned, but it had notwithstanding a great variety of colours they were all remarkably brilliant.

“What is it you feed them with?” asked Charles.

“Ants’ eggs and curds are the

most proper for them." said Peggy :
" but they will eat oats, and barley ;
and then they pick up wood-lice,
and ear-wigs, and other insects."

A loud squalling now diverted the
attention of the little party to another
object. They looked up, and saw it
proceeded from a peacock, which
was perched on the top of a high tree.

Charles inquired if any thing was
the matter with him but was answered
it was the noise they always made.
A little further in the wood they found
another peacock. His beautiful long
tail did not trail after him in the usual
way ; for he had spread it, so as to
make the feathers stand straight out
from his body ; and the eyes, or large
spots in the ends of the feathers, being

raised one above the other, had a very pretty effect. In this state he marched about with a proud air, and turned himself round and round, as if to exhibit his gaudy appearance to every body present. Arthur remarked another bird with a fine neck and head like the peacock, but without his beautiful tail. In answer to his inquiries, Mr. Ashley told him that it was a pea-hen, and added, that with very few exceptions. The females, throughout the feathered race, were greatly inferior in beauty to the males.

The party were returning to the house, when Arthur, who liked to know to what purpose every thing was applied, asked Mr. Ashley, what was the use of the fine birds they had been to see?

“They are merely kept as curiosities,” answered the gentleman. “Now and then we kill a young pea-fowl, to eat it as a delicacy ; but my chief motive in keeping them is, that I may have the pleasure of showing them to my friends.”

“ Pheasants are eaten sometimes, though, I know,” said Charles.

“ Yes,” said William ; “ but not gold and silver pheasants. The common ones that fly about wild, are killed in the shooting season by the sportsmen, the same as partridges, and other game ?

Charles. What do you mean by game ?

Mr. Ashley. Game denotes such kind of birds, or beasts, as are taken or killed by fowling and hunting.

As they were now arrived at the house, Mr. Ashley left them ; but the boys, at the request of Arthur, resumed their game at trap-ball.

CHAPTER XII.

The Story of old Maddox.

THE next morning at breakfast, the two boys entertained their grandpapa and grandmamma with a full account of what they had seen on the preceding day ; and both dwelt with particular pleasure on the beauty of the pheasants.

“ Did you take notice of Harry Maddox, the old man who has the care of them ? ” inquired Mr. Mansfield.

The children replied, that he was

for some time walking with Mr. Ashley; but that he took no notice of them, and that they had remarked nothing particular about him.

“That man” said Mr. Mansfield, “shabby and mean as he now appears was once in possession of considerable property. It was his idleness alone that reduced him to poverty.”

“How so, grandpapa?” inquired Charles. “Pray tell us about him.”

“I was going to do so,” returned Mr. Mansfield, “in the hopes that the history of his misfortunes might be a striking lesson to you, not to fall into the fault that has been the occasion of his ruin.”

Maddox’s father rented a capital farm, a few miles from this village.

Harry was a school-fellow of mine, so that in his childhood I saw a great deal of him. He had some good qualities. He always spoke the truth, and I don't recollect that he ever did any thing spiteful, or injured another for the purpose. His great fault was a habit of constant idleness. At play-time, when the rest of the boys were amusing themselves at their different sports, Maddox might always be found sitting on the stump of an old tree, that once overshadowed the playground ; and all his employment was to scratch up the earth with a bit of stick. This was so constantly the case, that the stump was called by the boys *Maddox's seat* ; and I have been told that it still goes by the same

name ; though, most likely, the circumstance that gave rise to it has long been forgotten. You may suppose that in school hours Harry did not gain much credit. He was oftener in disgrace than any boy amongst us. He stood near the bottom of the lowest class, and I do not know that he ever made his way much higher. Indeed, how should he ? for all the time that he ought to have spent in learning his lessons, he passed in holding the book in his hand, or twisting the corners of the leaves."

Charles. I should have thought he would have been punished if he could not say his lesson ; and he would not like that, I suppose.

Mr. Mansfield. Perhaps he did not

like punishment ; but he liked the trouble of avoiding it still less. Indeed after a smart caning, he would sometimes sit down to his book, and learn as much in half an hour as most of us could in a whole one. His being able to do so, as our good master used to say, made him so much the more inexcusable. " If, Maddox, you were dull by nature and could not learn," I remember his telling him one day, when the boy was crying, and begging not to be flogged, " I should pity you ; and as long as you did your best, should never be angry : but in you, who have really a good understanding, this idleness is unpardonable, and you need not hope to escape correction." Correction, however,

and encouragement, were equally thrown away upon Maddox ; and he left school at fifteen, after having passed a miserable time, derided by the boys and scolded by the masters.

Arthur. What became of him then grandpapa ?

Mr. Mansfield. His father took him home, intending to bring him up in the farming line ; but he found he could make nothing of him ; so he put him apprentice to a brewer who was in a good way of business.

However, Harry still continued to do nothing, and to learn nothing ; so that, when he was out of his time, his master was very glad to get rid of so useless a hand, and declared he would have nothing further to say to him :

notwithstanding he was then in want of a partner, and that old Mr. Maddox, the father, offered to advance a considerable sum, if he would give him a share of the business.

Some time after this, he married ; and his father then set him up in a brewery by himself, and gave him all that was necessary to begin trade with.

His success, however, was just what might have been expected. He did not like to give himself any trouble ; and the beer was accordingly so bad, that nobody would buy it. In short, he lost all his customers, and ran into debt ; so that every thing he had was taken away to pay his creditors.

The kind father, once more, re-

ceived his son, with his wife and family, into his own house; and instead of being angry, he tried to console him in his misfortunes, by telling him, that as long as he had a shilling in the world he should share it with him; and that, by industry and frugality, they might yet do very well. One should have thought that such great kindness, and the distresses he had brought upon himself, would have had some effect on the mind of young Maddox: and indeed, for a short time he went on pretty well; but he soon relapsed into his former habits of indolence. As long, however, as his father lived, he did not know what it was to be in want. It is true, he was accustomed to lie in bed till noon, and

then to doze in an arm chair the greatest part of the day. But his father was up before the dawn, and continued to attend to the concerns of his farm till after the sun was set; for he found that much additional industry was required, to enable him to support such a large increase to his household. Harry at length lost his excellent parent, and had the misfortune, not long after, to bury his wife.

Charles. Ah, poor Maddox! How badly off he must have been then, grandpapa!

Mr. Mansfield. He was, indeed, my dear. All good management was at an end, both in the house and in the fields. He took no care of his children himself, nor did he provide any

body to look after them for him. His sons, in consequence of this neglect, grew up to be very wild young men. They were always in company with the most worthless fellows in the neighbourhood; and at last one of them ran away to sea, and never was heard of more. The youngest girl fell into an ill state of health, and perished for want of care and nursing. The eldest daughter, mother to the little Peggy whom you saw at the cottage, was the only one of the children that grew up to be a comfort to herself, or to her family. She married at a very early age, but unfortunately for Peggy, died some time ago.

Arthur. So poor Peggy has no mother; What a sad thing for her!

Mr. Mansfield. She has no father neither, my dear; but we will talk more of her by and by, if I have not tired you with my long story.

Charles. Oh, you need not be afraid of tiring us grandpapa. We like to hear you very much, and I want to know how Maddox went on with his farm.

Mr. Mansfield. Why, he left his farm to take care of itself! and when the men went to him for directions, he used to tell them to begone about their business, and do as they would, he should not trouble himself about the matter. So perhaps one wanted to sow beans, when another wanted to sow corn; and then they would get into a quarrel, and not work at all.

By this means, the seed was never put into his fields till after it had begun to grow up all the country round ; and as he took no care to keep his land clean, it was always choked with weeds ; and in all the time he was a farmer, he had not a single good crop. His fences too were left in the most ruinous state, and his neighbours' cattle used to get into his fields through the gaps in the hedges, and do much mischief among his corn and hay. Then sometimes his own beasts trespassed in the same manner upon the grounds of other people, and he was obliged to pay for the damage they did ; and if they were sent to the pound, it was some expense to him to redeem them.

Arthur. What do you mean by saying, they were sent to the pound?

Mr. Mansfield. A pound is a small spot inclosed with high rails, in which cattle that go astray may be confined; and the person whose office it is to keep the pound, claims a certain fee when they are sent for by the owner.

Maddox's farm belonged to Mr. Ashley; and when the lease was out, his landlord refused to grant him another. From the time of the old man's death, the rents had been very irregularly paid; and besides, Mr. Ashley did not choose to let any part of his estate to a man who suffered it to go to ruin.

Charles. Indeed, I think he was in the right. I should not like to have

my fields, that might be kept in nice order, like your's, grandpapa, spoilt for want of proper care. But what became of Maddox, then?

Mr. Mansfield. He hired a wretched cottage, and lived for some time upon the little money he had by him. When that was gone, he was actually reduced to beggary. He had scarce a rag to cover him, and could barely get food to keep him alive. I happened to hear of his miserable situation, and I called on Mr. Ashley, to consult about what could be done for him.

Arthur. And what did Mr. Ashley say?

Mr. Mansfield. He said he was sorry to hear of his distress; and would be glad to relieve him, if it were in his

power; "But," added he, " what can I do? It is not proper to maintain a strong hearty man, like Maddox, in idleness. He learned so little when he was young, that I know he can hardly read or write; therefore I cannot make him my steward. If I hire him as a labourer, he will not do a day's work in a year; and I am sure, for the pains he would take, my deer might be all lost, or stolen, if I made him deer-keeper." Soon after this conversation, however, Mr. Ashley inclosed a part of his park, for the sake of keeping pheasants, and then he resolved to intrust the care of them to Harry Maddox, and ordered that he should take little Peggy to live with him; for the poor girl had just before

had the misfortune to lose both her parents.

Charles. Oh, you promised just now to tell us something about Peggy.

Mr. Mansfield. I have only to say, that her character is the very reverse of her grandfather's. She is a notable, active girl, and does a wonderful deal for her age. As Mr. Maddox still continues the same, the birds would be sadly neglected, if it were not for her care. Mr. Ashley put her to school, where she learns to work; and I believe she keeps both her own and the old man's clothes in very tolerable order. The cottage, too, is neat and clean, though there is no one to do any thing besides herself.

“ I thought she was a nice girl,” said Charles. “ She was at work, you know, Arthur, yesterday afternoon, when we went there.”

“ Yes’, replied Arthur, “ and the old man was fast asleep. What a contrast between them !”

“ You see,” rejoined Mr. Mansfield, “ though she is but a child, in how respectable a light her industry makes her appear. She acquires the esteem of all who know her, and she has the satisfaction of feeling that she does not live in vain. As for poor old Maddox, I don’t know from what source his satisfaction can arise. The review of his past life can afford him no comfort; and if he looks forward to the close of his present existence

he must be shocked at the account to which he will then be called, for duties neglected, talents misemployed, and a family ruined through his want of care.

Arthur. Well, I have often been told that I ought to be a good boy, and mind my lessons; but I did not know before, that idleness could lead to so *much* mischief. I always thought that, when I was a man, I should attend to my business as a matter of course.

Mr. Mansfield. Ah, my dear child, you are much mistaken, if you suppose that you will be able to get the better of your faults, only by growing older. Now is the time for you to acquire good habits of all sorts; and

if you neglect to do so, depend upon it, that when you are come to be a man, you will find the task only rendered a great deal more difficult, from having been so long delayed.

“ Very true my dear,” said Mrs. Mansfield. “ Besides, little folks should consider, that it is not their future advantage alone which should lead them to take pains with their studies. It is one of the absolute duties of their infant state. God Almighty did not mean that any of us should be idle; and a child who is idle when he ought to be at his book, as much transgresses the will of God, as a man who neglects his trade, or a woman who takes no care of her family.”

“ I think,” said Mr. Mansfield,

starting up as he looked at his watch, “that whilst I have been prating away in favour of industry, I seem to have forgotten that I have a thousand concerns to attend to. But I will no longer act in a way so contrary to my precepts. And so good morning to you. I am off till dinner-time.”

CHAPTER XIII.

*A Pleasant Ride.*

The story of Maddox had a very good effect upon the minds of the young Bensons. They immediately brought out their books, and spent some time in reading and learning their lessons. Afterwards Mrs. Mansfield heard them the catechism, and explained to them some parts of it which they did not clearly understand.

When Mr. Mansfield came in to dinner, he said that he should be obliged in the afternoon to go upon

business to a place about ten miles off; and he asked his wife, if she would like to accompany him in their one-horse chaise.

“Thank you, my dear,” returned Mrs. Mansfield; “but it would give me more pleasure if you would take the boys. I know they would enjoy a ride, and they have been very good this morning.”

“Have they so?” said the obliging grandpapa. “Why then, if you will give up your place, I will take them very willingly. I like the company of good children.”

The party thus settled, dinner was quickly dispatched; the chaise stood ready at the door, and the boys jumped into it with a look of pleasure on their

countenances that may more easily be fancied than described.

Part of the road they were to travel, lay through a large forest. Here they had an opportunity of seeing a variety of trees, and Mr. Mansfield answered with the greatest readiness every question they put concerning them.

“What tree is that, grandpapa?” inquired Charles, pointing to one, that grew near the road; “the one, I mean, that has such an amazing large trunk, and the branches of it spread to a distance all round?”

Mr. Mansfield. It is an oak, my dear; the most valuable timber tree that grows.

Arthur. What are timber trees?

Mr. Mansfield. Trees that are used

in building houses and ships; principally oaks, elms, and ash-trees.

Arthur. And you say that the oak is the most valuable of all; pray what makes it so?

Mr. Mansfield. The wood is very hard and tough; not apt to splinter, nor liable to be eaten by worms: and as it remains sound for a great while when under water, it answers very well for purposes of shipping, or for piles, or bridges; in short, for any thing that requires strength and durability.

They now came to a part of the forest where many large oaks had been lately felled. Leafless, and stript of all, but the stumps of the larger branches, they lay at length upon the





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ground, and made a striking contrast with the green and flourishing trees that grew around.

Charles inquired, what made them look so white? To which Mr. Mansfield replied, that they had been stript of their bark, or outer skin, which was used by the tanner, in the process of manufacturing leather. "Indeed" added he, "every part of the oak may be employed in tanning; the sawdust, the leaves, all have a binding quality, that, in process of time, will harden the raw hide of beasts into leather."

"Acorns grow upon oaks, don't they?" said Charles.

"To be sure they do," returned Arthur. "I have seen them in abun-

dance since we have been riding,
Are they good to eat grandpapa?"

Mr. Mansfield. You would find them bitter and disagreeable, but pigs and deer fatten upon them. Did you ever take notice of the cups?

Ashesaid this, he broke off a bough from a tree which they were passing, and gave it to the boys to examine.

"Would you suppose," asked he, "that these large oaks, that cover so much ground, and form the glory of the forest, all sprung from acorns no bigger than these?"

"It is very wonderful," said Arthur. "Pray, sir, are they long growing?"

Mr. Mansfield. An oak seldom comes to perfection in less than two

hundred years, and they will sometimes live four or five hundred. Our English oaks are particularly esteemed but they are much fewer in number than they once were. In ancient times, before there were so many inhabitants, and when cultivation was little attended to, almost the whole island was one forest. It has been cleared by degrees, however, and converted into corn and pasture land; and we have only a few forests of any size. In consequence of this, oak timber is much scarcer than it used to be. If you go into old houses, that were built two or three centuries ago, you will see nothing but oaken floors and oaken wainscots. Now the case is altered, and people are obliged to

be contented with wood of a very inferior quality. Deal, for instance, is much used for the purpose I have mentioned.

Charles. Are there any deal trees in this forest, grandpapa ?

Mr. Mansfield. There are no such things as deal trees, Charles. It is the wood of the fir, which, when cut up into timber, is called deal. By and by, I will point out to you a plantation of firs, of which there are several different species. They are all ever-greens; that is, they do not lose their leaves in winter. The Scotch fir is the most hardy, and thrives well on the bleak mountains of the north. It may likewise be reckoned the most useful; for it supplies us with the best

deal for making masts of ships, floors, wainscots, tables, boxes, and other things. The trunk and branches afford excellent pitch and tar. The roots, when divided into small splinters, are sometimes burnt by poor people instead of candles. The outer bark is used, as well as that of the oak, in tanning leather; and I have heard that there is a place in Scotland where they make ropes of the inner bark; and that in some of the northern countries of Europe, in times of scarcity, they grind it, and mix it with their flour when they make bread.

Arthur. I see another large tree, grandpapa; but it does not look like the oak.

Mr. Mansfield. 'Tis a beech; and

very useful tree to the cabinet-maker. Its branches, you observe, slope gently downwards, instead of growing straight out, and it is more full of leaf than the oak. That tree on the left is an ash. Its foliage is very light. The wood is much used for making implements of husbandry, particularly hop-poles.

“And there is a fine stately tree!” remarked Charles, “is it another beech?”

Mr. Mansfield. No, Charles, that is an elm: a timber tree of great value. You may often see them in hedge-rows, and they are frequently planted in rows to make avenues in parks. The inner part of the wood is almost as solid and heavy as iron; and is

therefore much used in mill-work, and likewise to make axle-trees, keels of boats, chairs, and coffins.

“Pray, pray,” interrupted Arthur, “look at that tree a little way off, how the leaves flutter with the wind! They are in a constant motion; but yet it is very calm, and all the other trees are still.”

“That tree,” replied Mr. Mansfield, “is called an aspen, or a trembling poplar. It is the nature of it to be in that constant agitation, whether the wind is high or not.”

“What is done with the aspen?” inquired Charles,

Mr. Mansfield. The stem is bored for water-pipes, and is also made into milk-pails, clogs, and pattens.

The business which Mr. Mansfield had to transact, detained them so long that it grew quite dark as they were returning home; and the little boys were surprised, in the midst of the gloom, to see a bright shining speck upon the ground. "What is that, what is that, grandpapa?" they exclaimed at the same instant. "It looks," added Charles, "as if one of the stars had fallen to the earth." "And I see another, and another," said Arthur laughing: "oh, what can they be?"

"They are glow-worms," replied Mr. Mansfield; "and you may find numbers of them, after dark, at this time of the year."

"They are very pretty," said Ar-

thur. "I should like to see one near. Will you be so kind, sir, as to stop for a moment, and let me get out and fetch one?"

Mr. Mansfield consented, and Arthur jumped out, and presently returned in triumph with his prize. They then saw that the glow-worm was a small insect, something bigger than a wood-louse; and that the brightness proceeded from a part under the tail. The light it gave was strong enough for them to see what o'clock it was by their grandfather's watch, when held close to it.

"I have been trying, grandpapa," said Arthur, after having sat still for some time, with the glow-worm in his hand, "to find what it is that oc-

casions the light ; but I cannot make it out."

" I believe, Arthur," said Mr. Mansfield, smiling, " that this wonderful little insect has puzzled philosophers much wiser than you. I never heard its luminous appearance explained in a very satisfactory manner ; and not at all in a way that you would understand.

Charles. There is no difficulty in finding out glow-worms, let it be ever so dark.

Mr. Mansfield. Your remark, my dear, brings to my mind a pretty fable I once read about a glow-worm ; and the moral of it was, that we ought not to boast of any external advantages we may possess, or despise

those who happen to be without them ; since the very things we are proud of, often bring down misfortunes upon us.

Arthur. But what was the fable, grandpapa ? In my book they always put the fable first ; but you have begun with the moral.

Mr. Mansfield. A glow-worm, vain of her beauty, began to upbraid a poor humble wood-louse, that lay beside her. “ Dost not thou admire my splendid tail,” said she, that sends forth a light almost as glorious as the stars ? Insignificant reptile that thou art ! wonder at thy boldness, in venturing so near to one of my brilliant appearance. What admiration wilt *thou* acquire, or when

wilt *thou* become the pride and glory of the night ?”

The wood-louse replied with great humility, “ Happy in myself, I do not wish to draw the attention of others ; and if I have not thy beauty to boast of, at least I am without thy pride.”

A nightingale, who was singing in a neighbouring bush, attracted by the light of the glow-worm, flew to the spot where she lay, and seizing the vain insect in her beak, carried it away to feast her family. The wood-louse, concealed in darkness, escaped the enemy's notice.”

CHAPTER XIV.

Bees.

The next morning, when the little boys were getting up, they were surprised by hearing a tinkling sound just under their windows. This induced them, as soon as they were ready, to run down into the garden, that they might see what was going forward.

Mrs. Mansfield was the person who occasioned the noise, by striking the lid of a tin saucepan with a large key.

“ Oh, grandmamma, what are you

about?" exclaimed Arthur, laughing. "I should have taken you for my little sister Kate, amusing herself by making, what she would call, a *pretty noise*."

"I do it, my dear, to prevent the bees from going away," returned Mrs. Mansfield. "Don't you see what swarms are flying about?"

"Yes," returned Arthur. "But what have they to do with the key and the saucepan lid?"

"All these," said Mrs. Mansfield, "are young bees, that have been hatched this summer; and now that they are grown up, the hive is too small to contain them. They therefore have left it, and are going to seek another place for themselves,

and it is generally supposed that a tinkling noise will keep them from going to a distance; though, whether it has any effect, or not, I cannot pretend to determine."

By this time the bees had settled in a cluster, on the branch of a tree, where they all hung together in one great mass. Ralph then took an empty hive, and shook them into it, having previously covered his hands and face, that he might not be stung.

"How do bees make honey, grandmamma?" inquired Charles.

Mrs. Mansfield. By means of their long trunks they suck up the sweetness that is in the cups of flowers.

Charles. And is that honey?

Mrs. Mansfield. Not until it has

been further prepared by the bees, who swallow it, and then throw it up again, after having properly digested it in their stomachs.

Charles. Bees make wax too, do not they?

Mrs. Mansfield. Yes: come to this bed of flowers, and you may see them at work.

“I observe,” said Arthur, after having watched them attentively for some time, “that they every moment stroke their legs over one another; is that for any particular use?”

Mrs. Mansfield. It is in order to put the yellow dust, which they collect from the flowers, and of which the wax is made, upon their hinder thighs; where a few short hairs form a

kind of basket, on purpose to receive it. When they have collected as much as they can carry, they fly back to the hive to deposit it there.

Arthur. And what use do they make of it, grandmamma?

Mrs. Mansfield. After having kneaded and properly prepared it, they make it into the honey-comb, or little cells which contain the honey; and when the cells are full, the bees stop them up with a little more wax, to preserve it as food for the winter.

Arthur. Then how do we get it?

Mrs. Mansfield. The hive is held over brimstone, which kills the bees, and then we take out the honey-combs. Some people adopt a method of taking the honey without destroy-

ing the bees: but I do not know whether that is less cruel in the end; for the poor things are then frequently starved in the winter, for want of their proper food.

Arthur. Have not I heard something about a queen bee?

Mrs. Mansfield. Very probably you have. There is a queen to every hive, and she is larger than the rest. She very seldom comes abroad, and whenever she does she is attended by a number of her subjects. They are so much attached to her, that if she dies, they make a mournful humming and unless another queen be given to them, will at last pine away, and die too.

“How very surprising!” said





The Bees.

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Charles. "Who would have thought, that such little insects could show so much attachment?"

Mrs. Mansfield. The natural history of the bee is full of wonders, my dear. Besides the queen, there are two different sorts, the drones and the working bees.

The drones seldom leave the hive and never assist in procuring honey. When the time comes for making up the winter stores, they are, therefore, all killed by the working bees as being useless members of society. As they are without stings they are unable to defend themselves. The working bees compose the most numerous body of the state. They have the care of the hive, collect wax and ho-

ney from the flowers, make the wax into combs, feed the young, keep the hive clean, turn out all strangers, and employ themselves promoting the general good.

Arthur. They are very industrious, indeed Charles! Do you recollect, Dr. Watt's little hymn about the busy bee?

Charles. Yes, brother. I was just thinking of it.

Mrs. Mansfield. Repeat it then will you, my love? After the account I have been giving you, we shall attend to it with particular pleasure.

Charles. How doth the little busy bee

Improve each shining hour!

And gather honey all the day

From every opening flower!

How skilfully she builds her cell !
How neat she spreads the wax !
And labours hard to store it well !
With the sweet food she makes,

In work of labour, or of skill,
I would be busy too ;
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

In books, of work, or healthful play,
Let my first years be past ;
That I may give, for every day,
A good account at last.

CHAPTER XV.

*An Evening Stroll.*

As the weather was remarkably pleasant, Mrs. Mansfield proposed having tea earlier than usual, that they might afterwards have time for a walk ; and the rest of the party approving the scheme, they set off in high spirits, the moment that meal was concluded. Mrs. Mansfield was not a very good walker, but she leaned upon her husband's arm, and enjoyed the fineness of the evening. It was not their intention to go to any

great distance from home ; so when they came to a stile, or the stump of a tree, she sat down to rest herself, and take a view of the country ; during which time, the little boys amused themselves by running backwards and forwards, and would frequently pick up some flower, or curious little pebble and then bring it to their grandpapa, to inquire of him its name and use. As they were proceeding gently by the side of a large pond, they saw a great number of birds skimming over the surface in all directions. In answer to Arthur's inquiries, Mr. Mansfield replied that they were swallows, and that they were flying about in quest of food.

“What food,” asked Charles, “can they possibly expect to find growing upon the pond?”

“Flies and insects,” answered his grandfather, “are the proper food for swallows, and many of them are constantly sporting on the water.”

“And swallows,” said Mrs. Mansfield, “are thought to be of great service, by destroying so many millions of them, which would otherwise multiply so fast, as to be quite a nuisance to the world.”

Charles. Can they catch them as they fly?

Mrs. Mansfield. Yes, my dear. Their mouths are made large, that they may take in their prey the more

easily; and indeed, every part of the swallow is wonderfully adapted to its nature, and manner of living.

Arthur. How do you mean, grand-mamma?

Mrs. Mansfield. As in pursuit of insects, it is necessary for them to be almost constantly on the wing; their bodies are very light and small, and the wings being long in proportion, they fly with great ease and swiftness. This is more particularly needful to them, because they are birds of passage; that is, they go to different countries according to the season of the year. They come over here in large flocks about the middle of April, and in October they assemble again in great numbers, and fly across the

sea to some warmer climate. They make their nests with clay, and line them with feathers and soft grass; building them chiefly a little way down the tops of chimneys, or under the eaves of houses. As they have little occasion to be upon the ground their legs are short and ill adapted for walking.

“Your remark, my dear,” said Mr. Mansfield, “that swallows are formed in the best manner possible for their habits of life, is perfectly just; but it should not be confined to them. The God of Nature has equally adapted every other bird, and I may add, every animal, to the state for which he designed it.”

Arthur. Has he, indeed, grand-

papa? I wish you would tell me about them then. I should like you should give me an account of every creature that lives.

Mr. Mansfield. Oh, my dear! I am much too ignorant of natural history to be able to do that. Indeed, I know very little of it; but the more I read and the more I observe, the greater reason I see to admire the wonderful goodness and wisdom of the Almighty.

At this instant, Charles, who had been running to a little distance, returned with great speed, bringing with him, by the hinder leg, a dead animal he had picked up which was rather smaller than a common rat, but broader in proportion to its length.

“What is this, what is this?” asked he.

“A mole,” said Mrs. Mansfield, who saw it first.

“A mole!” repeated her husband; “Oh, bring it to us then. This little animal, Arthur, will serve as an instance of what I was saying; for no creature can be more exactly suited to its mode of life.”

“How so, sir?” inquired Arthur. “In the first place,” returned Mr. Mansfield, “you should be informed that the mole lives almost constantly under ground, as its food consists of worms, and little insects, that it finds in the earth. It is therefore necessary for it to be able to work its way through the earth; and if you examine

it well, you will find it admirably constructed for that purpose."

"Indeed," said Arthur, "I see nothing very particular in it."

Mr. Mansfield. Look at its fore feet. They are broad, strong, and short; not set straight from the body, but inclining a little sideways. By means of this position, it is enabled, as it burrows its way, to cast off the mould on each side, so as to make for itself a hollow passage in the middle. Their breadth likewise make them serve the purpose of hands to form their nests, scoop out the earth, and seize their prey. The form of the body is equally well contrived. The fore part is thick and strong, so that it can dig its way with wonder-

ful quickness, either to pursue its prey, or to escape from its enemies; whilst the hinder parts being small and taper, suffer it to pass easily through the loose earth, that the fore feet fling behind.

“ It is of a clean black colour,” said Charles; “ and the hair is short, and thick, and very soft.”

“ True,” said Mr. Mansfield; “ and the skin is so tough that it would require a sharp knife to cut it. It is not therefore liable to be injured by flints, or other stones, that it may meet with in its passage underground. Now let me see which of you can find its eyes,”

Charles. “ The eyes, the eyes! grandpapa, this mole must be without eyes !”

Arthur. “ I would find them if I could, but it certainly has none.”

Mr. Mansfield parted the hair, and pointed out two very small specks, “The smallness of the eyes,” said he, “is to this animal a peculiar happiness. Had they been larger, they would have been liable to frequent injuries, from the mould falling into them ; and of what use would they be to him, when destined to pass his whole life where no light could reach him?”

Arthur. “ But then, sir, how do they see to get their food?”

Mr. Mansfield. They do not see it, Arthur; they find it out by their smell, which as well as their hearing is very acute; so that, though nearly

blind, they are not without the means of providing for their support, and of knowing how to avoid danger. The eye is therefore, merely given them to let them know that they are out of the way when they see the light. The mole shows great art in skinning worms, which it always does before it eats them; stripping the skin from end to end, and squeezing out all the contents of the body. During summer, they run in search of snails and worms in the night-time among the grass, which often makes them the prey of owls. Moles do a good deal of mischief in fields and gardens, because, by running under the earth, they loosen the roots of plants and corn.

CHAPTER XVI,

*The Return Home.*

The next day was the day appointed for the young Bensons to return home. They rose earlier than usual, that they might have time to walk round the farm, and take a last look at those objects that had given them so much pleasure. They first went to the poultry-yard, and took with them some tares, to feed a pigeon that was grown so tame as to fly down when he saw them, and perch upon their heads. Their next busi-

ness was to take leave of Plover the poney, for whom they had both contracted a great affection; for, after Charles's fright, Mr. Mansfield had given them several lessons in riding, and they had learned to manage him tolerably well, and were exceedingly delighted with the exercise.

They were stroking him, and lamenting that they should have no more rides, when Ralph came up.

Honest Ralph was much attached to his master, and was disposed to love his grandchildren for his sake; and their constant civility and good humour conspired to make them his favourites.

As he had heard what they were saying, he very obligingly brought

out the saddle and bridle; and, harnessing the poney, told them that breakfast was not yet ready, and that they should have a ride the last morning.

These words “ the last morning ” brought the tears into Charles’s eyes; but as he had a good deal of fortitude, he strove to suppress them, and mounting upon Plover, galloped away to a distance that he might not be seen to cry. Presently after Arthur took his turn, and as it grew late, they then went in doors.

They found Mr. and Mrs. Mansfield in the parlour, and the post-chaise, in which they were to set off, was already at the door. They were therefore obliged to hurry over their

breakfast, that they might not keep their grandfather waiting for them; for the old gentleman had engaged to accompany his grandsons to London; where he was to remain for a few days. Mrs. Mansfield kissed both the boys over and over again, and charged them to give her love to their papa and mamma, and little sister. She bestowed upon them great commendations for their good conduct and docility, during the whole of their stay, and told them that as they seemed to have enjoyed their visit, she hoped they would repeat it at some future opportunity.

Arthur and Charles pressed her hand, and returned her embraces; but their voices failed when they

attempted to thank her for the great kindness she had shown them.

At length the moment of separation arrived; but before they stepped into the chaise, they went round to shake hands with the servants, who had all assembled about the door, in order to see them set off, and wish them good-bye for the last time.

When the carriage drove off, a gloom hung for a short time upon the countenances of the young travellers; but it cleared away by degrees, as their attention was diverted to a variety of new objects, and in a short time they entirely recovered their usual gaiety.

After they had been travelling for some miles, Mr. Mansfield informed

them, that they were then upon a new road, which a few years before had been cut through a steep hill.

“ You observe,” said he, “ that we have a high bank on each side of us, so that we seem to be almost buried between the two. The spot where we now are was formerly level with the top of the banks, and made a part of the same field with them ; and the old road then went several miles further about, for the sake of avoiding this hill. But now that the ground has been cut away so as to leave the road on a gentle ascent, coming this way saves time, and is less fatiguing to the horses.”

“ It must have been a work of great labour,” said Arthur.

“Certainly,” said Mr. Mansfield, “but it is nothing in comparison to some works that have been accomplished. What should you think of making canals, or artificial rivers, for forty or fifty miles together, where before there was dry land?”

“Is it possible,” asked Charles, “that that should ever have been done?”

Undoubtedly, my dear, in several places,” answered Mr. Mansfield. “When a number of men, Charles, unite together in the same work, with prudence and industry, it is difficult to say what they *cannot* do.”

The travellers did not arrive in London till late in the evening. Arthur and Charles rejoiced to meet

again their dear parents and sister, from whom they had never before been separated ; and they felt, that though they might enjoy an occasional excursion, yet for a constancy no place was so happy as HOME,

THE END.

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